



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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EBAY SCAM NETS LENGTHY PRISON TERMS

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that 26-year-old Eric Conner, of Las Vegas, Nevada, was sentenced to 90 months for Conspiracy to Commit Access Device Fraud and 100 months for Mail Fraud, with the sentences to run concurrently. He was also ordered to pay \$460,361.16 in restitution to Citicorp, The Home Depot, GE Consumer Finance, Lowe's Corporation and Sam's Club, in addition to 3 years supervised release. On November 10, 2005, Conner was found guilty by a federal jury.

"Thieves who use the Internet as a means of selling stolen property will soon find themselves inside of a federal prison," stated U. S. Attorney Johnny Sutton.

At trial, the government showed that Conner fraudulently obtained numerous account numbers of legitimate customer credit accounts approved for use at Sam's Club, Wal-Mart, The Home Depot and Lowe's Corporation. As part of the scheme, Mr. Conner and his codefendants would enter a Sam's Club store and falsely present as an authorized purchaser on a legitimate Sam's Club customer account, asking for a replacement Sam's Club membership card or to create a membership card for his use. The defendants would have a photograph taken which would correspond with the unauthorized Sam's Club account information of a legitimate account holder. They would then make fraudulent purchases at Sam's Club and Wal-Mart stores on the compromised credit account and thereafter sell the purchased items, including tools and gift cards on Ebay. The EBay account of defendant Eric Conner was used and known as "edollaz".

On December 9, 2005, codefendants, Daniel M. Hester and William Whatley both were sentenced to 72 months in federal prison with Hester being ordered to pay \$576,642.51 in restitution and Whatley being ordered to pay \$366,854.06. Codefendant Shannon L. Pollock was sentenced to 24 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$576, 642.51 for his role in the scheme. The remaining defendant, Daniel Beery is a fugitive.

Similar schemes were carried out at the other retail establishments throughout the United States with the defendants moving across the country in an attempt to avoid detection by law enforcement authorities. An additional part of the scam, involved the defendants presenting themselves as authorized purchasers for country clubs, hotels, golf clubs, oil companies and construction companies.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service and was prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Ashley Chapman.